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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/846,940	04/30/2001	Jerry A. Volquardsen	P04971US0	4674

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DES MOINES, IA 50309-2721

EXAMINER

FISHER, MICHAEL J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3629

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/846,940	VOLQUARSEN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Michael J. Fisher	3629	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 April 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 8-51 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 8-51 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-5 and 8-51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US PAT 6,219,930 to Reid.

As to claim 1 Reid discloses a method of estimating cost of dent repair (title), which includes gathering data (inherent in that the data is gathered), processing the information according to a pre-existing estimation program (claim 1, last two paragraphs), generating an estimate of repair costs (title), characterizing the size of the dents (col 3, lines 26-31) and identifying and characterizing a cluster (col 2, lines 53-64, col 4, line 66-col 5, line 8). Reid further teaches using the system on high concentrations of dents (indeed, on any concentration of dents, as "(dents per unit area" would be used to measure a measure of a "high concentration of dents").

Reid does not, however, teach using this system for paintless dent repair (PDR) or specifically mention that the computer would do the calculating. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the system as disclosed by Reid for PDR as Reid teaches it as a good way to estimate the cost of dent repair and PDR is repairing dents. Further, Reid teaches using equations (col 5, lines 50-55) therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the computer to calculate the cost as computers are very well known to be useful in calculating the results of equations.

As to claim 2, Reid discloses using stored digital data (col 4, lines 25-34).

As to claim 3, Reid does not teach using a global computer network. Reid does teach using computers (col 4, lines 25-34) and it is very well known in the art to connect computers to a global computer network (the Internet). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art modify the system as disclosed by Reid by using the Internet to ease access to the information.

As to claims 4,20, Reid does not teach confirming that the damage is susceptible to PDR. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to confirm this as the system is being used for PDR and therefore, it would be inherent that the user knows if the dents can be fixed using PDR.

As to claims 8 and 21, Reid discloses confirming the cluster is contained in a predetermined area (the template) and counting the number of dents (col 3, lines 14-16).

As to claims 9 and 22, Reid discloses using the range of dent sizes and cluster information to estimate total cost of repairs for the vehicle (as discussed above, Reid discloses using dent size and cluster information and further discloses estimating cost in col 6, lines 11 and 12).

As to claims 10,23, Reid discloses manually counting damage and using that information to generate a repair estimation (claim 1).

As to claims 12,25, Reid does not teach using the Internet to request a web page hosted by a web server. Reid does teach using computers (col 4, lines 25-34) and it is very well known in the art to connect computers to a global computer network (the

Art Unit: 3629

Internet). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art modify the system as disclosed by Reid by using the Internet to ease access to the information and further, it is inherent that Internet sites are web pages hosted by a web server.

As to claim 13, Reid discloses completing a data input template (col 4, lines 52-54).

As to claims 14,24, Reid further discloses a computer input adapted to digitally store information about body damage (fig 5), and to generate an estimation report based on inputted data (col 4, line 67- col 5, line 2).

As to claim 15, Reid does not, however, disclose two computers, Reid discloses only one computer. As is well settle in case law, duplication of parts is well within purview of one of ordinary skill in the art (see *St. Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co., Inc.* 193 USPQ 8,11 (7th Cir. 1977)). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use two computers to have a central storage of information to reduce the chance of losing data.

As to claim 16, the template has indicia to prompt recordation of certain information (col 4, lines 3-4).

As to claim 17, the worksheet is physical.

As to claims 18 and 19, the worksheet is shown to be displayable on a computer (col 4, lines 30-34).

As to claim 26, Reid discloses a hand carryable and manipulatable device (template) which has a length, width and thickness (as is inherent in three dimensional objects), a plurality of openings in the device (fig 3), one of which could be

Art Unit: 3629

characterized as a "further" opening that would meet the limitations as claimed as the openings are used to estimate clusters of dents. Reid does not, however, teach using this system for paintless dent repair (PDR). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the system as disclosed by Reid for PDR as Reid teaches it as a good way to estimate the cost of dent repair and PDR is repairing dents. Further, Reid discloses gauging the size of the dents (col 4, lines 13-18) and further, if the system is to be used for PDR it would be inherent that the dents are identified as being proper for PDR and not too small or too large.

As to claim 27, the device is shown as a sheet of material (col 3, lines 57-59).

As to claim 28, it is shown to be flexible (col 3, lines 57-59).

As to claims 29 and 30, the make up of the template is considered to be an obvious matter of design choice, therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use paper, or laminated paper, to make the template as this would be inexpensive and would not make losing a template too costly.

As to claim 31, the template is shown to be plastic (col 3, lines 8-9).

As to claims 32,46, the make up of the template is considered to be an obvious matter of design choice, therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use regular, letter-sized paper, as this is cheap and abundant.

As to claim 33, Reid discloses indicia identifying the plurality of openings (54).

As to claim 34, it would be inherent that areas are arranged next to each other and that the next area would be closest to the preceding.

Art Unit: 3629

As to claim 35, the size of the openings is considered to be an obvious matter of design choice (In re Rose, 105 USPQ 347 (CCPA 1965)) and therefor is not considered to be patentably distinct.

As to claims 36,27, Reid discloses an opening larger than the other openings (fig 2 compared to fig 3).

As to claim 37, Reid discloses using a representative area to estimate total dents (col 3, lines 18-25).

As to claim 38, Reid discloses the dents as being hail damage (col 2, lines 59-61).

As to claim 39, the template would project the openings onto a vehicle (by placing it on the vehicle).

As to claim 40, Reid discloses the device as using light (scanner 60).

As to claim 41, the device is a plurality of devices (templates) each with openings (figs 2 and 3).

As to claim 42, Reid does not teach adjustable openings. Reid does teach a need for different sized openings (col 4, lines 13-18), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have adjustable openings in a template that is not transparent, as in that example, as Reid discloses templates that are not transparent (fig 3), and Reid further discloses needing to know the various sizes of the dents.

As to claim 43, Reid discloses a worksheet (equations at col 5, lines 50-56).

As to claim 44, the worksheet could be electronic (col 36-41).

As to claim 45, Reid further discloses a recording medium (computer and scanner) having indicia prompting a user to record a set of identifying information about the vehicle (this would be inherent as the computer would need to know which car was being scanned) and further, a set of information about the damage to the vehicle (dent size and number).

As to claim 48, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide an instruction sheet so the user could know how to use the template properly.

As to claim 49, Reid discloses providing a plurality of dent estimation methods (equations, col 5, lines 50-55).

As to claim 50, Reid discloses counting dents using the templates (claim 1).

As to claim 51, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to get clients to use the system as taught by Reid as Reid shows it as a good way to estimate damage and businesses require clients. Further, it would be inherent that the access to the information would be dependent on a level of authorization, whether allowed or not allowed, according to whether one is a customer or not, i.e. paying compensation.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 4/17/07, with respect to rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112 have been fully considered and are persuasive. These rejections have been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments filed 4/17/07 with respect to the rejection under art have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. As to argument that Reid does not

Art Unit: 3629

identify any cluster of dents or characterize such clusters, as noted in the rejection, applicant is directed toward the disclosure at column 5 lines 1-2, "... (dents per unit area and relative size of dents) is subsequently used to compute the damage cost estimate." Reid explicitly states that "dents per unit area" (a characterization of the cluster) is used as part of the repair estimate. As to arguments that "Dent estimation is disclosed to multiply those two pieces of information from one small representative area to extrapolate total number of dents ... which in turn is extrapolated to a cost estimation for repair of the whole car.", applicant is further directed to column 5, lines 2-8, "Additional data, including the surface are.... Since the top (horizontal) surfaces 14, 16, 18 of the vehicle are damaged to a greater extent than the side surfaces... a plurality of estimation formulae have been devised to account for this difference". The examiner would further note that claim 37 of the instant invention claims extrapolating the number of dents on the entire car (or on a part of the vehicle, as disclosed by Reid) from a representative portion.

The examiner will not further treat arguments that applicant notes have been addressed in previous actions.

As Reid is disclosed as characterizing clusters of dents, it would be inherent that it is used for any and all concentrations of clusters of dents, including "high", were that concentration present in the vehicle for which an estimate is being generated.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael J. Fisher whose telephone number is 571-272-6804. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 7:30am-5:00pm alt Fri. off.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3629

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Michael Fisher



Patent Examiner
GAU 3629

MF
6/27/07

